



THE SERMON

on the Mount

So What?

The Sermon on the Mount Recap...

- Introduction to the Kingdom of God
 - The upside-down kingdom
 - Pivotal Statement: “Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” – Matt 5:20
 - 2 kinds of righteousness... (2 motivational systems)
 1. Scribes & Pharisees: I obey, therefore I’m accepted
 2. Disciple of Jesus: I’m accepted, therefore I obey
 - Last week Jesus concludes the body of his message...

Matthew 7:13-23

¹³ “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

¹⁵ “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Matthew 7:13-23

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

No Middle Ground/No Fence

- Jesus closes his sermon with a series of powerful illustrations regarding who God accepts
- 4 warnings... meant to encourage believers to give their lives fully to him (enter the narrow gate), to “watch out” for danger along the journey (false prophets), to obey his commands with the correct motivation (do the will of the Father), and to build the foundation of their lives on his teachings (do what he says)
 - 2 gates and 2 roads
 - 2 types of trees and 2 types of fruit
 - 2 types of “followers”
 - 2 types of hearers (wise & foolish), 2 foundations, 2 houses
- In each example Jesus gives an unsettling alternative to life in the kingdom – you’re either in or you’re out!

3 Warnings for Professing Christians

1. The Narrow Gate vs. The Wide Gate

- Jesus begins his conclusion talking about gates and roads
- The narrow gate is Jesus himself & represents life
 - John 10:9; Acts 4:12; John 14:6... Jesus is the only way

3 Warnings for Professing Christians

1. The Narrow Gate vs. The Wide Gate

John 10:9... I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.

Acts 4:12... Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

John 14:6... Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

3 Warnings for Professing Christians

1. The Narrow Gate vs. The Wide Gate

- Jesus begins his conclusion talking about gates and roads
 - a. The narrow gate is Jesus himself & represents life
 - John 10:9; Acts 4:12; John 14:6... Jesus is the only way!
 - Not a popular teaching in our culture!
 - The invitation to follow Christ is both exclusive and inclusive... Anyone can enter but only through Christ
 - b. The wide gate is any other name, belief, religion or god which you might strive to be saved by – it is a life dedicated to “self” and going your own way. It’s an attempt gain God’s acceptance through works or an outright rejection of God’s way to life. It’s only destination is destruction
- Acceptance and salvation is found through Christ alone

3 Warnings for Professing Christians

1. The Narrow Gate vs. The Wide Gate

2. Good Trees vs. Bad Trees

- BIG warning – there will be those who seek to deceive the believers and they will be difficult to spot
- “Sheep’s clothing”... They act and talk like believers and even quote or preach the Bible, but their goal is to deceive
 - Jude 12-21...

Jude 12-21

¹² These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. ¹³ They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.

¹⁴ Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵ to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” ¹⁶ These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

Jude 12-21

¹⁷ But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. ¹⁸ They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.” ¹⁹ These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

²⁰ But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

3 Warnings for Professing Christians

1. The Narrow Gate vs. The Wide Gate

2. Good Trees vs. Bad Trees

- BIG warning – there will be those who seek to deceive the believers and they will be difficult to spot
- “Sheep’s clothing”... The act and talk like believers and even quote or preach the Bible, but their goal is to deceive
 - Jude 12-21...
- We know them by their fruit – they are in it for their own gain and that will become evident
- Be careful who you listen to
- Who is discipling you?

3 Warnings for Professing Christians

1. The Narrow Gate vs. The Wide Gate

2. Good Trees vs. Bad Trees

3. 2 Types of people who claim Jesus as Lord

- a.** People who call Jesus “Lord” and do God’s will
 - Motivation: “I am accepted; therefore I obey”
 - True disciples seek first the kingdom of God and are “your kingdom come, your will be done” people
- b.** Those who call Jesus “Lord” but do not do God’s will
 - Motivation: “I obey; therefore I am accepted”
 - Deadly consequence of giving your life over to trying to earn your acceptance through your own efforts
 - Obedience is useless with the wrong motivation/heart

The Heart of the Sermon on the Mount

1. Entrance into the New Kingdom and acceptance by God is found in Christ alone
2. Righteousness/goodness does not come by adherence to the letter of the law, but through the spirit
3. Stop trying to gain God's acceptance through your own goodness and religious activities – it's exhausting and futile!

Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”